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# A CHARGE

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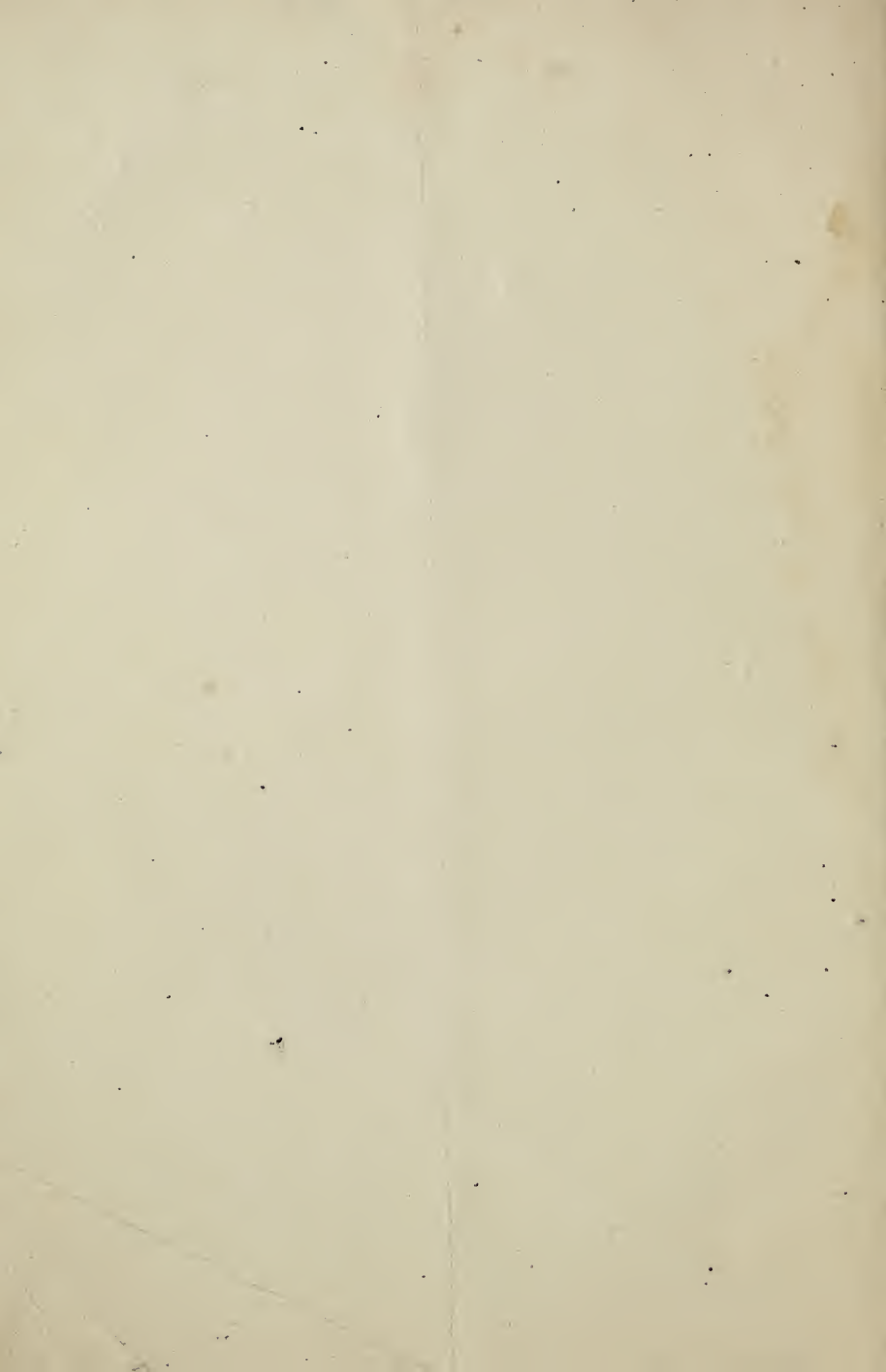
JOHN GREGG, D. D.,

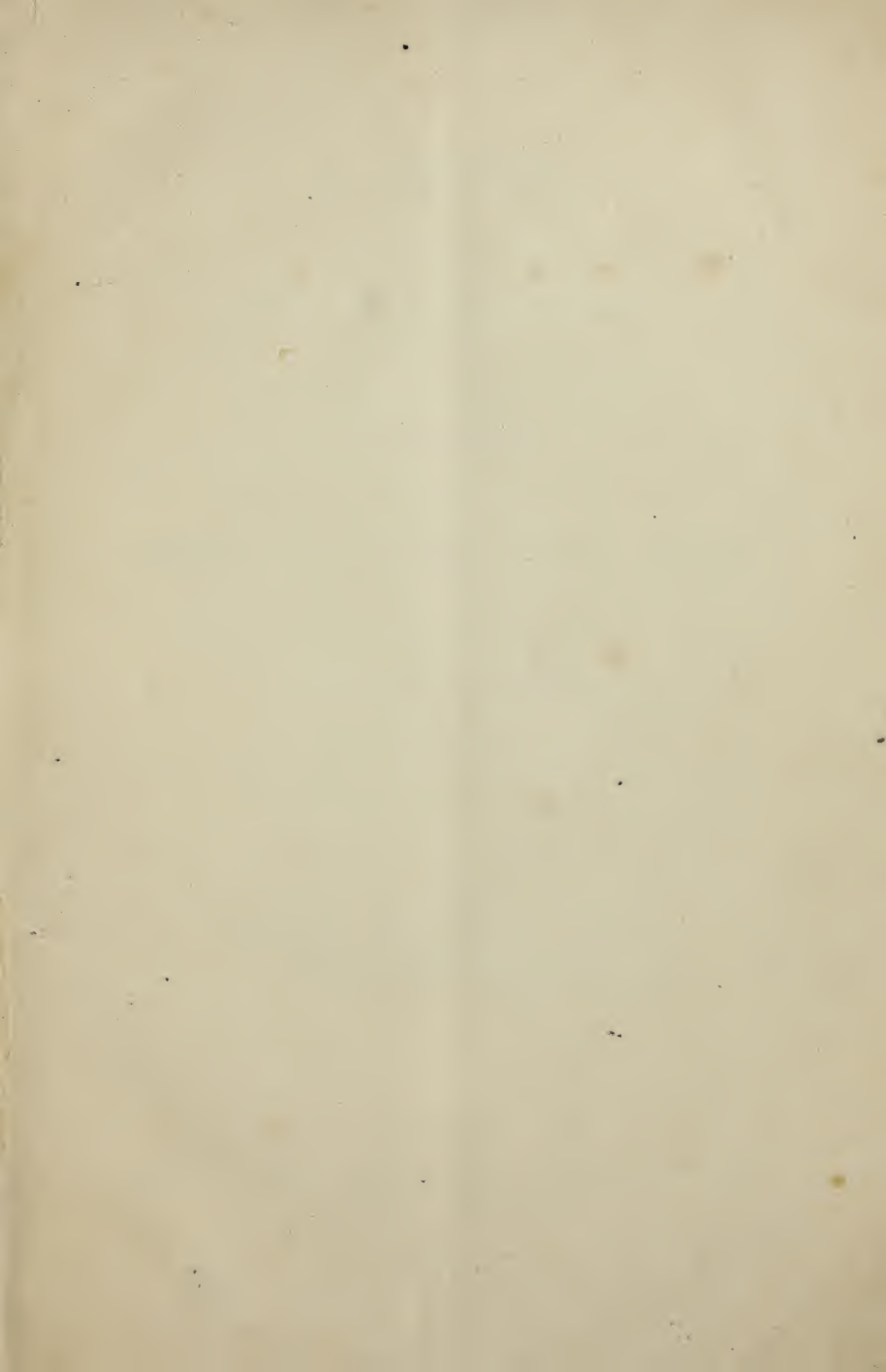
*BISHOP OF CORK, CLOYNE AND ROSS.*


*October, 1864.*

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*From the Author*

A CHARGE  
DELIVERED  
TO THE CLERGY  
OF THE  
UNITED DIOCESES  
OF  
CORK, CLOYNE, AND ROSS,  
AT THE  
ORDINARY VISITATION  
OCTOBER, 1864.

BY  
JOHN GREGG, D. D.,  
*BISHOP OF CORK, CLOYNE, AND ROSS.*

DUBLIN :  
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## A CHARGE,

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MY REVEREND BRETHREN,

I wish to direct your attention rather briefly, on this occasion, to the character and conduct that become you, as pastors of the flock. At your ordination, as you know, you were constituted christian pastors, not alone according to the laws of this church and realm, but also by the supreme authority of the Lord Jesus, the great Head of the Church. The pastoral office you have duly received, and its duties you are expected to fulfil. The dignity to which you are raised is high, and the responsibility thereof great, the charge which is committed to you is weighty and the duty important. All is right *without* in laying on you the dignity and committing to you the trust, and great will be the results if only God give you *grace*, and *all be right within*. If there be in you the love of Christ and the love of his people and the love of souls—if you have a hunger and thirst after right-

eousness, and a passion to win souls, you have the true foundation of pastoral excellence. You need but cultivate and exercise with unceasing diligence these great affections and mighty passions on their appropriate objects, in your proper field of labour, and then will you, by God's blessing, bring honour to your Master and benefits to his Church. Your great example in the pastoral office, as in all other things, is the Lord Jesus, the "Shepherd and Bishop of our souls." He is called the Pastor of the sheep, the good Pastor, the great Pastor, the chief Pastor, "who left us an example that ye should follow his steps." This confers a dignity on the pastoral office which nothing can transcend. God's own and only begotten Son did not think it beneath Him to become a Pastor, the Pastor of his people, and to lay down his life for the sheep. How *vigilant* is this Pastor! he never slumbers nor sleeps; how *assiduous* is this Pastor! he never leaves nor forsakes his sheep; how *tender* is this Pastor! "He shall gather the lambs with his arm and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young." How *loving* is this Pastor! "Having loved his own which were in the world he loved them unto the end." "If ye seek me," says he, "let these go their way." How *observant* is this Pastor! "I know my sheep. My sheep hear my voice and I know them, and they follow me." So, my brethren, may you strive to be watchful, assiduous, tender, considerate, loving



and observant pastors, intructing the people in the way of salvation, and guiding their feet into the way of peace ; “ neither as being lords over God’s heritage, but being ensamples to the flock.”

The good Pastor not only knows his sheep, but he calls his own sheep by name, and leads them out ; he gives unto them eternal life, he delivers them out of the mouth of the lion, and when they walk through the valley of the shadow of death they need fear no evil, for he is with them, his rod and his staff their comfort. What a model for man to study ! The heavenly Pastor of a happy flock ! How delightful for you pastors, and for the people of your charge, to be able to say, in the language of the Psalmist and our daily service, “ We are his people and the sheep of his pasture !” But, it may be said, Jesus was a perfect pastor, He was perfect God and perfect man. “ He hath done all things well.” “ Never man spake like this man.” True, but yet God thought it good that we should have continually before us, a model man, without flaw or failing, a perfect example of godliness and virtue, of lowliness and love. It is well for us to contemplate perfection embodied in our nature, to survey and behold it in active operation, and endeavour to copy and follow it in our daily life. The more we dwell on the excellency of Jesus, admire and love his perfections, imbibe his spirit and follow his steps, the more heavenly will be our character and the more exemplary our life. Kings

in ancient times were called pastors, and there surely is something dignified, princely and exalted in the character and bearing of a true Christian pastor. In the language and teaching of Scripture, such a one is sacred and royal, with the sanctity of a priest and the dignity of a king. Power and riches and splendour belong to kings, and were ever connected with royalty, but wisdom and knowledge and learning and blessing, which are higher endowments, have been associated with priesthood ; and so the homage and attention of mankind have been almost equally divided between the sacredness and illumination of priests or pastors and the mightiness and magnificence of kings. Though it be impossible that you should be pastors with the perfections of your Master, Jesus, yet surely it is not too much to expect that you will strive, with God's blessing, to be pastors like Barnabas, or Timothy, or Titus—pastors who had Christian graces and manly virtues, and who yet withal were men liable to temptations, as you are, and men, too, of like feelings and passions with yourselves.

Good pastors are a great gift to the people ; they are bestowed on the Church as a blessing, and are always found to be such ; *bad* pastors are *blind* leaders, heads without *eyes*, guides without knowledge, miserable men they are, casting discredit on the ministry ; they are an affliction and infliction on the people, a plague and a pest to the Church. The prophet says of such pastors, " Woe be unto

the pastors that destroy and scatter the sheep of my pasture," and "for the pastors are become brutish and have not sought the Lord ; they shall not prosper and all their flocks shall be scattered." But such pastors have a dreadful and melancholy prospect before them ; they must give *account* of his flock, when the Chief Shepherd shall appear. He will say to each in that great day, "Where is the flock that was given thee, thy beautiful flock ?" And then will he address them in words, woful and withering, "I never knew you : depart from me, ye that work iniquity."

Consider the language in which God describes the good and godly pastors, "And I will give you pastors according to mine own heart, which shall feed you with knowledge and understanding." And of Levi he says, "My covenant was with him of life and peace ; and I gave them to him for the fear wherewith he feared me, and was afraid before my name. The law of truth was in his mouth, and iniquity was not found in his lips ; he walked with me in peace and equity, and did turn many away from iniquity. For the priest's lips should keep knowledge, and they should seek the law at his mouth : for he is the messenger of the Lord of Hosts." Read carefully and prayerfully and weigh thoroughly the character and conduct of those pastors as described in the Old Testament, who received God's approbation ; *they* ministered to God in sacred things, and taught the people His

saving truth ; *they* were men *set apart* for this holy and heavenly purpose, and their *hearts* were engaged and engrossed with their work. You have higher privileges, and richer grace, and nobler fields of labour than they had. You may surely imitate their example, in being wholly devoted to your sacred calling, and entirely engaged in your Master's service. You cannot indeed be sacrificers as they were—that typical service has passed away. That was the shadow ; the substance is Christ. Yet, as Christian pastors, you have much to do with God for the people, and much to do with the people for God. You have Jesus, the true sacrifice, the true Priest and the true Temple, to whom to minister and for whom to live. The all-sufficient atonement and all-prevailing intercession is vested in Jesus. He has passed into the heavens, the High Priest of our profession and the propitiation for our sins. The affairs of God's family, of God's portion, in the times of the Old Testament, were ever carried on by a consecrated priesthood, and duly authorised teachers, with which the people neither did, nor had a right to interfere. The Church was prosperous in proportion as the teachers were faithful, and devoted to their calling ; disorder and disaster ensued, as they disregarded or neglected their work. Learned, enlightened and devoted pastors have been ever a blessing to the people ; have supplied them with wholesome instruction and example, and the people, when



instructed and guided and tended, have always proved happy and grateful and prosperous flocks.

The faithful pastors of the olden Church in the time of the prophets, represented *the people* in their approaches to God, *laying their wants before Him*, and in their approaches to the people they represented *Him*, *in laying His will before them*. For God they sought glory *from men*, for men they sought salvation *from God*. It is written "I will place salvation in Zion for Israel my Glory." Happy period, happy priesthood, happy people, when Zion's King is honoured of his people, and Zion's people are blessed of her King! The instruction which we receive in the New Testament respecting pastoral character and conduct is very full. This instruction we collect from the life and teaching of our gracious Master, and from the example and instructions of his inspired servants. In the times of the Prophets, the Priests, that is, the authorised ministers and teachers of religion, derived their authority from God, to minister and teach in His Church. That authority did not originate with men; that authority was committed to men by God, and transmitted by His authority through men to others; none ventured without His authority to interfere with the services of His House, or to take upon them the public instruction of His people. "And no man taketh this honour unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron." The priests, or guides, or

teachers of the people were separated and consecrated to sacred offices, for sacred purposes ; they had a divinely appointed service, and great promises of blessing and support. Had they continued faithful to their trust, had they continued in the pure worship of God, and taught the people according to His word, Israel would have remained till this day, a glory to God and a praise in the earth ; but “ they forsook the God that made them and lightly esteemed the Rock of their salvation.” “ For,” saith the prophet, “ my people have committed two evils ; they have forsaken me, the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns that can hold no water.” “ How is the gold become dim, and the fine gold changed !” “ Yet,” says he, “ I planted thee a noble vine, wholly a right seed ; how then art thou turned into the degenerate plant of a strange vine unto me.”

The Jewish Church began from God, had promises from God, had authority and holy ordinances of worship ; and yet, because she departed from the way and the truth which God had prescribed, when Messiah came she was unprepared to receive Him ; because she knew not the Scripture, she knew not the time of her visitation, she crucified her Lord, and she knew it not ; and now her glory is departed, and her greatness is gone. Many of her teachers taught for doctrines the commandments of men, and made the commandment of God

of none effect by their traditions. They were warned and forewarned, yet they took not heed ; they departed from the truth of the Lord, they would not hear Moses and the Prophets, they depended on their own authority and tradition and teachers ; therefore are they scattered throughout the earth, a by-word and reproach among men.

The Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus, received anointing and authority from God ; the Spirit rested upon Him, "God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto him." "All power is given unto Me in Heaven and in earth," saith He. This great Pastor was made perfect (that is, perfectly fitted, qualified and furnished) through sufferings, and then became "The Author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey Him." He came not *unsent and unqualified*, and, when sent and qualified, was entirely devoted to his work. He could say to the Father at the end of His mission, "I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do." Before His departure from earth, He chose under shepherds, He gave them authority and fitness, and promised His presence, that they might preach His gospel, instruct His people, and collect and feed his flock. The Apostles, when He left them, chose *fit persons* to preach and teach the truth, administer the ordinances, and build up the Church ; as for example, Timothy and Titus, specimens of what bishops and ministers should be ; one, Paul's own and beloved son, likeminded with

himself, and the other, his own son after the common faith. They were fitted for the office of the ministry, *by nature, education and grace*; they received authority and promise, and were in a measure successors to the Apostles; what they received from the Apostles before many witnesses, by the hands of the Apostles, and the laying on of the hands of the presbytery, the same they were directed to commit to faithful men, who should be able to teach others also. So have office, and authority, and ministry and truth been transmitted with the promise of the continued presence of Jesus all days unto the end. The scripture declares, and history and the church attest, that it has been so done from the beginning till now. They who have this authority and office, from those who have or had authority and office to give, having the qualifications required, are gifts from God to the Church, and are to be accounted by the people as sent by the Lord, "the ministers of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God." All that is required of them is, (*but that is much*) that they wait on their ministry and be faithful to their trust, that they give themselves "continually to prayer and to the ministry of the word."

Our Great High Priest received gifts for men and gave gifts to men. "He gave some apostles, and some prophets, and some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers." These were the gifts he bestowed, and great and precious gifts they were.



The purpose for which he gave them is told us, to wit—"For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ." The gifts were given, not for that time and that generation only, but for all time and for all generations; not indeed extraordinary gifts, such as the apostles, with inspiration and miracle, with the wide world for their field of labor; but ministers with the ordinary ministry and mission of pastors and teachers, to wit—Bishops, Presbyters, and Deacons, to minister in their appointed places in the kingdom of Christ, with the high authority and promised presence of their Lord and King. Such, if duly qualified, are *able*, that is, *sufficient*, ministers of the New Testament, not of the letter but of the spirit, having the ministry of righteousness, the ministry of the Spirit, the ministry of life. They minister for God and to God in the public assembly, teaching, baptizing, and instructing the people, consecrating and distributing the sacred symbols, the holy mysteries of religion "as good stewards of the manifold grace of God." This was to be continued "till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measures of the stature of the fulness of Christ."

You, my reverend brethren, have authority to execute the pastoral office, and to teach and instruct the people of God; you have the promise of Christ that he will be *with you* if you be faithful to your

trust. Have you the aptness needed for this heavenly work? Aptness is very much derived from natural ability, culture, and sacred learning; holiness and devotedness come from above, entirely and altogether from the grace and mercy of God.

The titles given to God's ministers in the New Testament almost all imply the possession, or necessity of possessing, zeal and activity, diligence and prudence, and other qualities and virtues that interest men and win their regard. "Follow me," saith our Master, "and I will make you fishers of men." What labour and diligence and patience are here implied! "Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ." What courage and daring and devotedness and endurance are here suggested! Husbandmen are they named; by this term, are intimated toil and trouble for pastors, and patience and perseverance, working and waiting, and expecting the fruits of their work. They are desired to be like men striving for the mastery, and striving lawfully, that they may win and wear the crown. What absorption in the work of self-improvement and in the work of saving souls, and what a passion in the strife of glory does this comparison suggest! Labourers, workmen, ministers are called, implying application and exertion, even to *weariness from work*. They are at one time compared to the patient ox, laboriously treading out the corn, or ploughing up the earth; and again to angels, as though they should, like the

sanctities of heaven, give out light and fragrance, in their intercourse with men. They are at one time compared to builders working in the ground ; and again to stars, bright lights of heaven, burning in the sky. They are now called slaves of Jesus Christ, and again co-workers or co-operators with God. Sometimes they are called light and lights, implying knowledge and direction ; and again salt of the earth, as if intended to correct, preserve, and improve the minds and manners of men. Overseers are they named, implying charge, confidence, attention, and *account*. Elders or senators are they styled, as if they should have maturity, gravity, experience and wisdom, and as though they should almost give counsel to others in cares and matters of State. Men of God are they styled, implying not only that they are sent from God, but sent for God, and, therefore, should be godly, entirely and altogether devoted to God. Watchmen, messengers, rulers, heralds, ambassadors, are titles given them ; but higher still await them, since they are styled *servants of God and ministers of Jesus Christ*.

Thus you see, my brethren, what zeal, what watchfulness, assiduity, diligence and devotedness are to be expected from you ; what attachment to Christ, what absorption in His service, what intrepidity and heroic bearing in the discharge of your high duties ; what fearlessness, remembering whose servants and soldiers you are ; what dignity,

remembering your rank and office ; what tenderness and sympathy, and love, remembering to whom and by whom you are sent. Sent you are by Christ to his Church, to guard, to guide and to cherish her ; to his spouse, his body, his people, who are “ members of his body, of his flesh and of his bones.” This is a great and weighty work, needs much attention, and great and growing strength. *Strength* you must have, for this work, or you cannot do it ; *zeal* you must have, or you will not do it ; *diligence* you must have, or you will not continue to do it ; and *prudence and skill* you must have, or you will not *know* how to do it : and these you can have in one way, but in one way only, for the sake of Jesus, in fervent prayer and patient labour, by the grace and power of God. “ My son be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus.” “ I laboured,” said the apostle, “ more abundantly than they all, yet not I, but the grace of God that was with me.” The primitive pastors had these great qualifications, *and so can we* ; they did not work in their own strength, *neither should we* ; their sufficiency was of God, *so may be ours* ; they published the truth, *so may we* ; God blessed their work, *so may he ours* ; they gave themselves continually to prayer and to the ministry of the word, *so should we* ; we have the same authority and promise that they had ; and if we believe as they did, and pray to God and live to God as they did, and love Christ and love souls as they did, and work for Christ and work

for souls as they did, and administer the word of truth and the ordinances of Christ as they did, we, through God's mighty blessing on our prayerful and faithful labours, shall have the pleasure to see and rejoice over similar results.

My beloved Brethren—I desire now to *profit* you in your ministry, not to *please* you, to magnify *your office*, not to magnify *yourselves*. You have this trust and treasure in earthen vessels, and a goodly treasure and glorious trust it is. Pray fervently and strive earnestly that you may carefully guard the treasure, and faithfully discharge the trust. “O Timothy, keep that which is committed to thy trust.” “Hold fast the form of sound words which thou hast heard of me in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus.” “That good thing which was committed unto thee, keep by the Holy Ghost, which dwelleth in us.” A great office you have, a great honour you bear, but a great responsibility rests upon you, *magnum opus, gravis sarcina*. The work of the ministry is great, the weight is heavy ; but you have put your hand to the plough, look not back, or you are unfit for the kingdom of God. You are *in*, you should *on*.

“Then *on*, then *on* ; where *duty* calls  
Your course be *onward* still.”

“Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong.” Feed the flock committed to your care, instruct the ignorant and guide the sinner in the way of life ; seek after and seek out the lost,



bring back the wanderers to the fold of Christ. The prosperity of the kingdom of heaven is, under God, committed to your trust. The head of that kingdom is Jesus, its subjects, *his* servants, its law, *his* Gospel, its glory, the godliness of his people, *seen* in the holiness and loveliness of their lives.

In that kingdom, *which is the Church*, are many dangers to encounter and many errors to counter-act. The apostles forewarned the Church of the errors and dangers that should in time assail her, some from without and others from within. "I know," said Paul, "that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them." "In the last days perilous times shall come." "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith."

"But," said Peter, "there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you." Here are pointed out the enemies of the Church, and some of them, too, having authority to preach and teach; but yet, strange to say, preaching falsehood and teaching error, to make proselytes to their opinions and make a following for themselves. "For the time will come, (it is written) when they will not endure sound doctrine (the Gospel): but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears, and they shall turn away their ears from the truth,

(the Gospel) and shall be turned unto fables." The remedy for these evils is thus pointed out to us. "But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, (hardships) do the work of an evangelist, (preach the Gospel) make full proof of thy ministry" (fulfil thy ministry in all its parts.) "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed (nourish and tend) the Church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. "But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom (Paul the Apostle) thou hast learned them."

The word of God, happily for us, while it predicts the evil, points out the corrective ; it forewarns the Church of the errors to be introduced, and directs her to the truth which was given her to counteract them. Our safety consists not in resorting to *force* or *fraud* in behalf of truth ; nor in appealing to any infallible tribunal here among men, but in *cleaving honestly* by the grace of God to the Lord of truth in heaven, and to the truth of the Lord in earth. "And now, brethren," saith the Apostle, "I commend you to God and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified." Duly constituted ministers, watching for the souls of the people, speaking to them the word of the Lord, faithful in their teaching, fervent in their spirit and holy in their lives, reverently conducting

the public service, duly administering the ordinances, preaching in season and out of season, *the pure word of God, the truth, the Gospel*, the glorious Gospel of the grace of God, diligently visiting the sick, comforting the afflicted, and being ready for every good work—*these*, brethren, *these* are, under God, our best, our only security, for a well ordered and pious community, an attached and exemplary laity, reverential and devotional in the public assembly, virtuous and amiable in their families, worthy members of society, loyal to their Sovereign, just in their dealings, and peaceable in their lives.

It is not enough that you have authority to teach—you should *teach the truth* ; it is not enough that you have authority to preach—you should *preach the Gospel*. The promise of the Lord's presence is limited in the commission to those who teach and do *as the Lord directed*. The water of life flows through the channels which Christ has appointed and opened—*the apostolic ministry and faithful ministrations*, and not through self-constituted teachers, having no authority to teach, and therefore unsent. “And how shall they preach except they be sent?” Authority men must have, and sent they must be, if they would have the blessing *promised*, but yet authority and mission to teach the truth—only the truth—God's everlasting truth—but not to teach instead thereof or therewith, either false philosophy, or the fancies and figments of men.

It is not enough to teach the truth—you should



teach it *plainly*. It is not enough to preach the Gospel—you should preach so *as to be understood*. What good is your learning and reasoning (if you have them) to the people, if they *cannot understand you*? and what good is it to understand you, for you are not worth understanding, if you teach not and preach not the truth? Every one in the community knows and values and honours the good and plain and honest preacher, or pastor, or teacher; such an one is esteemed of the rich, he is loved of the poor. His ministrations have weight, and his visits have worth. He is ever blessing and is ever blest. “Ye shall know them by their fruits.”

I have heard it said sometimes, “*Such* a man is a very worthy man in his way, but he mistook his calling; such *another* is very clever, but he is a wretched preacher; this man preaches well, but he does not visit at all; this other is very agreeable in society, but he is a most uninteresting reader, his sermons have little in them, and his manner is heavy and dull.”

Be often in the houses of the poor, and you will know the measure of their minds. Catechise the young, and you will know how to instruct the old. Be with the sick and afflicted and witness their woes, and you will learn sympathy and softness. Do not give excuses to the people to leave your ministry and go to another; you have authority to teach and you have undertaken to teach, and

you ought to be able to teach, the truth, the everlasting truth of God. Let it never be said in reference to you, "The hungry sheep look up and are not fed." The laity are weary of such teaching, they murmur at it and justly complain; like animals tethered on a bare worn common, impatient for food and longing to be free; they seem to say, "Feed us or do not fetter us, give us food or we die." An old bishop of our church said to a pastor, complaining that his parishioners were wandering to other parishes, "Feed your sheep, and they will not wander."

Have life and love and practical wisdom in your ministry, and the people will love you and not leave you, they will honour you in your office and you will live in their hearts. "Stir up the gift of God that is in thee, for God hath not given us the spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind." Men even of moderate knowledge and unpretending ability, with *honest earnestness*, will tell on the people and win their affections, and make deep and lasting impression on their minds, where deep research and learned lore, with misty musty language and heavy manner, would fall powerless on the ear and be utterly unfelt. "Now speakest thou *plainly*," said the disciples to our Lord. "The *common people* heard him gladly," it was observed. It is *well, very well, extremely well*, to have teachers deep and clear, learned and wise, but a teacher *who is not understood*, is neither deep

nor wise, but rather shallow and silly, his learning is worthless, his talking is vain.

Are you Watchmen? rouse yourselves, sleep not, slumber not on your posts, sound the alarm in the people's ear, keep back nothing that is profitable unto them, "be pure from the blood of all men," shun not to declare unto them all the counsel of God. Are you Messengers? be active in your office and go to the people and bring them glad tidings of good. Are you Stewards of the mysteries of God? bring out of your treasure "things new and old," and "give them their portion of meat in due season." Are Scribes instructed unto the kingdom of heaven? tell them about that kingdom, and about Jesus, its glorious king; tell them of its abundant riches, *His mercy and grace*; of its door always open; of its way ever clear; of its light always bright and beautiful; of its provision good, ample and abundant. All this provision is made for sinners in the kingdom of Heaven, and is free to all for Jesus' sake, through him all may enter and all may live. That kingdom was founded in Jesus dying on the cross, and will be consummated in Jesus living in glory. Are you Preachers, that is heralds? Emblazon before men the titles of your Master, tell them and show them that Jesus is Lord and King; that he is head over all things, the "all in all," the "Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end." Speak of the glory of His kingdom and talk of his power; proclaim

war in his name against rebellious sinners if they yield Him not their homage ; and publish peace, everlasting peace through his blood, if they trust in his name, and abide in his word. Are you Ambassadors for Christ? Then treat with the people in his behalf, with the bearing, becoming ambassadors of the King of Kings. Tell them of his glory, his grandeur, his greatness ; tell them of their own meanness and littleness and guilt ; and pray them with the authority committed to you, in Christ's stead, "be ye reconciled to God." Pray and preach and teach and visit, remembering whose you are, and whom you serve. Have the crown that Jesus promised to faithful pastors, ever in your eye ; have no fellowship with *false teachers ; keep to apostolic order ; seek no communion with false churches—cleave to the truth ;* "Keep thyself pure." Be not high church, nor low church, nor broad church nor narrow church ; but be churchmen, true, Christian and Catholic, charitable to all men and faithful to Christ. Give no countenance to feuds, or factions, or party feelings—they but disturb the people and distract the Church. Heed not names however sounding, nor numbers however great ; take heed to yourselves, take heed to the doctrine, and you are sure to take heed to the Church. "Who is a wise man and endued with knowledge among you (a minister or teacher)? let him shew out of a good conversation his works with meekness of wisdom." Have faith in Christ,

have hope through Christ, and good will to men, and you have the essence of religion in heart and in life.

You belong to a Church with the primitive order and after the primitive pattern: be true to her teaching and you will be true to the Gospel, be true to the Gospel, and you will be true to yourselves. In this Church and according to this Church you can be true to your Master and true to his people. You may have therein communion and fellowship with men, holy and Christian and Catholic; you may have fellowship in the truth with the Father and the Son:—what more can you need on earth? What more, in its fulness, will you have in heaven? Venerate this Church for her origin and value her for her worth. She sprang from the truth, was nurtured in truth, is laden with truth, in truth she delights, to the truth she appeals, and by God's gracious blessing, in mighty truth shall she stand. Guard her integrity and mar not her mission. She holds the Gospel in her right hand as a light to the world. Stately is her figure, dignified her air, and simple her attire. Though aged she is not decrepit, she has the wisdom of age, and the vigour of youth; she has no deformity to hide, and she feels no decay; her eye is not dim, nor her force abated. She needs no tinsel nor trickery, nor tawdriness to commend her: they but conceal her comeliness, dim her lustre, and sully her name. Are you her sons? Then be like her, solid and simple. Let



there be no frippery in your doctrine, no foppery in your dress. Walk worthy of your mother, shew by your deeds from whom you are sprung ; she loves simplicity, purity and truth ; adopt her principles, imbibe her spirit, and walk in her ways ; shew your sensitiveness to her honour, your devotedness to her fame. Dishonour her not, show the nurture she has given you, and vindicate your descent—not with proud pretensions, but with sterling virtues, not with talking, but with teaching, in meekness not with menace, not with swelling words and haughty airs, but with weighty truths and noble and generous deeds. She is like the virtuous woman mentioned in the Proverbs, “ Her price is far above rubies.” May we prize her worth and follow her counsel : may we arise up, as her children, and call her blessed, and say in reverence and fond affection, “ Many daughters have done virtuously, but thou excellest them all.”

Full of years and honours and learning and wisdom, with a mother’s voice and a mother’s love, to you, her commissioned sons, she cries, “ Have Christ in your mind, Christ in your heart, Christ in your soul ; Christ in your teaching in public and in private, let it be your sermon, your hope and your trust.”

“ To write the same things to you,” beloved brethren “ to me indeed is not grievous, but for you it is safe.” “ If ye know these things,” as I feel assured many of you do, “ happy are ye if ye

do them." *Faithful ministration in all its parts* cannot be dispensed with, and faithful ministration *we* should supply. *Such* ministration the people need, and value, and like, and love, and *such ministration only*, has our Master promised to bless. May our churches be decent, the services solemn, the congregations devotional, the clergy devoted, faithful and true, the people righteous, sober and godly, then shall we have a church as she ought to be, like some great Cathedral, raised by religion in a commanding position, resting on its deep foundations, imposing and impressive, stately in height, just in proportion, regular in form, and venerable with age, elevating our mind with its towering grandeur, and awing us with its massiveness, magnificence, and strength.

Such then will be the Church, after the primitive pattern, a building of the true materials, "of gold, silver, precious stones," resting on the sure foundation laid by God's own hand in Zion ; on the Rock, the true Rock, the Rock of Ages, Jesus, the Rock of everlasting strength. On that Rock rested the Church in the golden days of the Apostles, and therein was her trust. On that Rock, Jesus, true, and tried, and tested, and on Him alone, would the Church, our mother, place all her sons ; on Him for safety, on Him for life, and on Him for strength ; and there may they abide, secure and safe, awaiting His coming and expecting His rest ; the gates of hell may assault them, but they shall not prevail.

On Him, and in Him, may we and our charge, and all that we love, rest and trust. For this object should we labour, and to this end should we pray. May we pray and labour, and watch and work for the glory of Christ and the good of His people, that the Church of our fathers, the Church of our choice, and the Church of our love, may be a blessing in the land and a praise in the earth ; that she may be as was the Church in the days of her youth, when her highest and holiest praise was that her children “continued steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.”

I know, my beloved brethren, and am thankful to know, that there are amongst you pastors, *not a few*, faithful, earnest, and assiduous, who go in and out among the people, men who have pleasure to do the Master’s work and to feed His flock, “not by constraint, but willingly ; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind.” Go on, brethren beloved, and prosper. Take heed to yourselves, take heed to the doctrine, take heed to the people, take heed to the Church ; pray, watch, and work, live for God, live for eternity. “Fight the good fight of faith ; lay hold on eternal life.” “Press toward the mark for the prize,” the crown is laid up for the righteous. You are servants, and yet free ; you have a gracious master, and a noble service ; no service like the service of Jesus, no freedom like the freedom of truth. “Stand fast in the



Lord," and be alive to your work. Souls are precious, and souls are perishing ; warn them of their danger, and show them their sin. Tell them of Jesus and his everlasting love ; watch for their souls as those that must give account. The time is short, our days are few, our season passing away ; Death is busy, he is thinning our ranks, and soon will lay us low ; " work while it is day ; the night cometh when no man can work." " Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." I pray God to make profitable to you what I have said, and to bless you all for Jesus Christ's sake.—Amen.



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